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DEPARTMENT FOR PRM/ANE, GENEVA FOR RMA

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TAGS: [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [UNHCR](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)  
SUBJECT: IFRC: MONITORING AND EVALUATION ASSESSMENT  
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT SPRMCO08VC048

¶1. (SBU) RefCoord met with Ahmed Gizo, Regional Director for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations (IFRC) in Amman on January 26, 2009 to discuss IFRC's work, under PRM-funded agreement, with the Jordanian Red Crescent (JRC) primary health clinics in Jordan. IFRC implements its health care programs through JRC and was working to improve management controls, and facilities within the organization. Gizo said that JRC showed weakness in financial management, as well as in control and monitoring of projects and resources. According to Gizo, the professional JRC staff had insufficient control of the activities of volunteers and professionals, such as private doctors who worked in cooperation with the JRC. IFRC was working with JRC to correct these shortcomings, but JRC was not yet prepared to monitor and control projects without IFRC intervention.

¶2. (SBU) Gizo explained that JRC professional staff was not sufficiently rigorous in their management controls to allow them to implement refugee assistance projects without IFRC guidance. Accountants and program managers were hired by JRC and trained/supervised by IFRC to monitor the progress of the projects and to report irregularities to JRC leadership. At every level of project management, IFRC worked in cooperation with JRC, taking a supervisory role when appropriate. For example, invoices for medical supplies were collected by JRC staff and double checked by IFRC before IFRC comptrollers reimbursed JRC field operations.

¶3. (SBU) Although Gizo found no evidence of wrongdoing in JRC's operations, he said that the lack of effective management controls opened the door to possible abuse or mistakes. IFRC took steps to ensure that donor funds were properly managed and accounted for by monitoring all JRC operations. IFRC information technology staff was working with JRC to create accounting procedures and to include JRC medical service statistics in the beneficiary information system (BIS), which is the UNHCR database used to track treatment and medication given Iraqi patients. IFRC was also working to integrate JRC data into the Jordanian national health information system. Gizo hoped that use of these two databases would allow JRC to more consistently monitor resources and services. Gizo said that JRC leadership appeared to be willing to accept IFRC assistance, but that the process required IFRC to provide close supervision of JRC staff.

¶4. (SBU) In his assessment of JRC work, Gizo said the branch offices throughout Jordan were strong, with good, well-trained employees. Gizo saw considerable advantage in working with JRC's local network of volunteers and in calling on the local knowledge of the heads of offices outside of Amman. Gizo gave local JRC offices high grades when administering core Red Crescent activities such as first-aid training, emergency response, and distribution of short-term material assistance. He said that offices outside Amman were

most effective when responding autonomously to local emergencies. Gizo said that Iraqi patients reported satisfaction with JRC medical staff and clinics.

15. (SBU) Comment: In subsequent conversations with the French and German Red Cross offices in Jordan (to be reported septel), RefCoord learned that IFRC was looking into serious allegations of fraudulent billing and other misconduct by JRC staff. The European Union Humanitarian Organization, ECHO took these allegations seriously and planned to end its relationship with JRC after 2008-2009 projects are completed. Gizo made no mention of these allegations. Although none of the allegations against JRC have become formal investigations, RefCoord can not recommend that PRM partners seek sub-agreements with JRC that put USG resources or funding into the JRC management system. In future evaluation of IFRC-Jordan health care programs, RefCoord will closely examine management and financial control systems. End comment.

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